

THURSDAY, MARCH 14, 1907.

Entered at the Post Office at New York as Second Class Matter.

Subscriptions by Mail, Postpaid.
DAILY, Per Month, \$3.00
DAILY, Per Year, \$36.00
SUNDAY, Per Year, \$6.00
DAILY AND SUNDAY, Per Year, \$42.00
DAILY AND SUNDAY, Per Month, \$3.50
Postage to foreign countries added.

Published by The Sun Printing and Publishing Association at 170 Nassau street, in the Borough of Manhattan, New York.

If our friends who favor us with manuscripts for publication wish to have their articles returned they must in all cases send stamps for that purpose.

Community of Interest in Public Utilities.

The omission from the Governor's Public Service Commissions bill of any mention of the telephone corporation has caused remark. Perhaps it was recognized that there is no real public feeling adverse to the telephone service; and it was felt therefore that in the absence of a general and deep seated clamor it would be just as well to let it alone. The significance of the fact that the telephone has not yet incurred the wrath of the Supreme Ruler is doubtless important and has a bearing of its own upon the immunity of the industry.

As a matter of fact the public is fairly well content with the telephone service, and has good reason to be so. It is in the main of wonderful efficiency, and that it is constantly growing cheaper is but an indifferent argument in favor of its confiscation. We hope it will not be harassed; at least, not until it has extended and perfected its system.

In view of the agitation of the public mind on the subject of "overcapitalization," might not some "community of interest" be wisely and profitably established between the State and the creature of the State? Suppose that, ten or fifteen years ago, the State (which comprehends the municipality) had proposed to the telephone interest in some such discourse as this: You hold a franchise to put your wires underground and elsewhere, and to levy a certain arbitrary toll upon the use of your plant. Your franchise in its nature is affected with an intimate public interest, and therefore the State cannot afford to be indifferent to your expansion and the relation of that expansion to the common welfare. The capital nominally involved in your corporation is \$50,000,000. Now, suppose in the future you increase that capital only by so much as represents the actual cash outlay for extensions and betterments, and then when you shall have earned and paid, say, five per cent. on all said capitalization you divide all earnings in excess of that five per cent. equally between your corporation and the State?

Does not this imply a quality of Government ownership that is attractive to both the State and its creature? Does it not make the State a partner, with control in essentials; while in no sense impairing individual initiative or corporate efficiency? Rationally presented ten or fifteen years ago to the telephone interest, would it not have been embraced, and would it not have inured vastly to the welfare of that interest and equally have advantaged the State?

Expansion in these things will go on forever. Is it too late to try the experiment of Government partnership in public utilities as an alternative to Government ownership, which is repellent to the better sense of all our people?

A Crisis in Buckram.
There is reason to believe that the United States Government will not take up the complaints of Mr. SAMUEL WEIL against the Nicaraguan Government with more enthusiasm than they actually deserve. Under the wise and tranquil dispensation now existing in the State Department this country is no longer in danger of getting itself embroiled abroad at the instance of any exploiter claiming American citizenship who happens to realize less than his expectations.

In the particular case of Mr. SAMUEL WEIL we have every disposition to believe that he has been operating in Venezuela with the purest and most benevolent intentions. Nor do we venture to suggest that any temptation whatsoever has diverted him for a moment or by so much as a hair's breadth. The fact seems to be, however, that he and the Nicaraguan authorities have disagreed over a matter of money—in absolute good faith, no doubt—and as the authorities in question have the power to enforce their own view of the matter the chances all seem to be that Mr. SAMUEL WEIL will have to contain himself as best he may. Apparently our Minister, Mr. MERRY, has made no protest on Mr. WEIL's behalf. It follows, therefore, that the State Department will hardly go over the head of its diplomatic agent in Nicaragua to espouse a purely private speculation at the expense of a friendly Government.

The incident came roaring in upon us with grisly rumors of Nicaraguan spoliation of Mr. SAMUEL WEIL, and bird hints of homicidal issues; not clashes between Minister MERRY and President Zelaya, but it is going out tamely enough, we hear, and according to all present appearances will soon be smothered in the noise of really serious events. The truth is that the day of the surly growl and the overblown ultimatum is gone. And a mighty fortunate commutation! For if we really expect to make friends of the Spanish American republics in this hemisphere and incidentally to establish mutually profitable commercial relations

with them, the sooner we win their cordial and sincere response by proofs of genuine respect and sympathy the better for the plan.

The Hon. ELIHU ROOT has made himself the pioneer of our amiable crusade. We may safely look to him for a wise, tactful and effective avoidance of every obstacle to its triumphant progress. Everybody knows that we are no longer hurling defiance and threats at Venezuela in behalf of American rapacity and spoliation. Is it likely that we shall resume a happily discarded rufianism in behalf of Mr. SAMUEL WEIL?

The Channel of Graft.

The latest aspects of the large canal business are these:
1. The State authorities now proceed, as is their duty, to advertise the sale of another batch of bonds of doubtful legality, which they have little hope of unloading in any other quarter than upon one of the State's own sinking funds.

2. There is a difference of opinion between the State Engineer and the State Superintendent of Public Works as to the number of millions which can be shovelled into this bottomless ditch during the coming season of active operations. Mr. SKENE thinks that \$7,500,000 will be required. Mr. STEVENS, who is well known as an expert in the financing of canal enterprises, thinks that \$5,000,000 is enough.

3. We begin to observe some exceedingly healthy indications of the formation of a new sentiment, even in the cities along the line of the canal, in favor of calling a halt and taking an account of the mischief.
It may promote Number 3 to glance at the manner in which the totals of Number 2 are achieved. The details are not yet published, but there are entries in the annual report of the Superintendent of Public Works which purport to explain an entire expenditure of \$2,603,117 on account of the large canal up to January 1, 1907. Consider these items:

Amount paid by State Engineer and Surveyor for engineering \$1,050,243
Amount expended by Advisory Board of Consulting Engineers for engineering and expenses 100,964
Total for engineering \$1,151,207

Amount paid to contractors by Superintendent of Public Works \$610,243

We have here engineering expenditures and alleged actual contract work in the proportion of about eleven to nine!

To continue with another branch of the industry:

Amount of damages allowed by Board of Special Examiners and Appraisers \$205,801
Amount expended by said Board for salaries and expenses 68,915

That is to say, adjustment of claims for damages at a cost of about 35 per cent. of the awards!

The Coming Colonial Conference in London.

Although Mr. CHAMBERLAIN's proposal that a preference should be given to colonial products in the British markets was supposed to be rejected definitely at the last general election, it is now certain that the project will be broached again in the Colonial Conference that is to be held in April. This is evident from the instructions issued to the delegates from three important dependencies, namely, the Australian commonwealth, New Zealand and Cape Colony.

The three colonies which we have named have decided to advocate the formation of an Imperial Council for the British Empire, an imperial system of defence, and the adoption of the principle of preferential trade on the part of the mother country as well as of her daughter States. Cape Colony, for instance, will ask the conference to consider the organization of a plan of imperial defence by which the contributions of each colony should be equitably fixed. It also directs attention to the importance of ascertaining the number of trained men who can be relied upon in an emergency for the defence of the empire. The Australian commonwealth and New Zealand earnestly favor the formation of an Imperial Council which shall meet in regular conferences and during the intervals be kept adequately informed by means of a permanent intelligence department.

It is evident, however, that the question in which the three colonies are most deeply interested is that of preferential trade. The Australian commonwealth declares it to be desirable that the United Kingdom grant preferential treatment to the products of the colonies, and Cape Colony, while reaffirming its determination to give preference to British manufactures in its own market, points out that the continuance of such preferential treatment will be largely dependent on the concession of some reciprocal privileges in Great Britain to British dependencies. New Zealand considers it essential to the maintenance of the preference now accorded by her to British manufactures that the mother country should at least grant a preference to such colonial products as are taxed under the existing fiscal system. Strange to say, the Dominion of Canada, which is the most populous, opulent and powerful of Britain's transmarine possessions, has put forward no programme, but she will have no fewer than five spokesmen in the conference, her Prime Minister, Sir WILFRID LAURIER, being accompanied by four of his colleagues.

So far as preferential trade is concerned it is not easy to see what useful outcome of the April conference can be looked for, in view of the inflexible resolve of the Bannerman Government not to tax food staples coming from the United States and other foreign countries in order that a preference may be given to similar colonial commodities by admitting the latter duty free. Then, again, although the Liberals, like the Unionists, would welcome contributions from the colonies to the imperial army and navy, they will be quite as reluctant to concede any but advisory powers to an Imperial Council on which the colonies should be represented. A merely advisory council would be clothed with no substantial authority, and as for a permanent intelligence department, the requisite information is now, or might be, furnished by colonial com-

missioners residing in London. That was the function which for many years before our Revolutionary War was discharged by BENJAMIN FRANKLIN for Pennsylvania and Massachusetts.

It would not be surprising if the result of the next conference should be to leave the self-governing colonies even more independent than they now are, instead of knitting them more closely to the parent State. The colonies object to appeals from the decisions of their highest courts to the judicial committees of the Privy Council, and to the reservation of legislation concerning certain subjects to the Imperial Parliament, or at least for examination and approval by the Secretary of State for the Colonies. Then, too, the Australian commonwealth and New Zealand have decided views of their own with reference to the extension of British interests in the Pacific, views which by no means coincide at all times with those of the British Foreign Office. On all these points the Liberals are likely to show themselves more indulgent than were their Unionist predecessors.

The Clerical Sociologist.

Sociology includes everything in the world. It is therefore a favorite elective study of amateurs. It adapts itself to every want. It can be made to furnish much entertainment as well as education. In this town what may be called the "seeing life" branch of sociology is popular, especially among strangers. There are also students who are special or regular students in that department. Perhaps curiosity is the most usual inspiration of those who attend one course or many courses in this great university of sociology. These thinkers slum it and lobster it, so to speak, with the most active professionals and "rounders." Their industry and zeal are admitted. They acquire more or less experience, at more or less expense. They "find out for themselves what is going on." Many of them develop views and regard themselves as experts.

We have no intermeddling fury about the matter. We would not spoil sport or lop the peculiar system of culture to which many sociologists devote themselves, sometimes with an affecting innocence. To be sure, vice will sometimes steal the clothes of virtue, and in crafty hands sociology may cover a multitude of sins. The "respectable" man, caught by some caprice of fate or the police, in places where "respectability" is not supposed to house, can always plead his sociological yearnings and go free. Indeed, a certain superiority and sanctity attaches to him. Henceforth he is a good man who has looked composedly upon evil and knows how the world is made.

Still it is old fashioned and narrow to believe that clergymen should keep away from sociological investigations which amount to nothing more than personal knowledge and inspection of vice? If they are called among the vicious, if they choose to live among them for purposes of religion and charity, they are to be praised. But this amateur slumming, this doubtful association with notorious vice, tends to breed suspicion among both the disolute and the cynical, and serves no useful or ameliorating purpose. Clergymen should renounce PARKURST and all his ways and works.

Abandoning the Antipodes.

It has been announced in San Francisco that the Oceanic Steamship Company is to relinquish its service between San Francisco and Sydney, N. S. W., by way of Honolulu, Pago Pago and Auckland. The news despatches credit the SPRECKELSES with assigning as the reason for this withdrawal the failure of the ship subsidy legislation. It was, however, but a week or so ago that our cable advices from New Zealand announced that the Government of the colony had decided to withdraw their mail contract from the Oceanic line because of the irregularities of the service.

The trade route between the Pacific Coast and Australia has always been a creature of mail contract or other form of subsidy. So far as it deals with the transport of freight it is the carriage of coals to Newcastle. In the colonies the products worthy of export are fruit and wine, wheat and wool, beef and gold; California sells to the world gold, beef, wool, wheat, wine and fruit. Scant chance there for interchange of commodities. Of all these articles gold is the only one which Australia has sent to America, and the steady flow of Sydney sovereigns to the San Francisco Sub-Treasury has been an interesting phase of the world encircling sweep of fiscal exchanges.

This line to the antipodes had its beginning in the boom period just following the civil war. It reached to the Southern Cross in much the same spirit that Steinberger gobbled Samoa. The Pacific Mail was first in the field with a line from Sydney to San Francisco by way of Fiji and Honolulu. It was a picturesque voyage in southern seas past the towering heights of New Caledonia, then the distant loom of the Fiji sentinel out of Galoa on the island of Kadavu, then a day of threading the countless islands of eastern Fiji, and almost every day some new archipelago coming into view. There was a mail contract then, and there was keen competition for the tourist traffic, for the Pacific Mail could land the returning colonist sooner in London by days than the Peninsular and Oriental. Along about 1880 New Zealand offered a mail contract and the line was altered to take in Auckland, with a stopping of the engines off Pago Pago for the transfer of passengers and mail to Samoa.

In the course of time the SPRECKELSES, then the dominating financial interest in Hawaii, fell out with the Pacific Mail and started an island line of their own. With the Honolulu trade cut off from them, the Pacific Mail had to effect a composition, as a result of which the SPRECKELSES took over the line to the antipodes. For many years they conducted a monthly service with small and slow boats, and before long it became necessary to admit the Union Steamship Company of New Zealand to one-third interest in the line, that is to say, one boat of every

three flew the burgee of the New Zealand company, and this steamer was invariably better than the American Alameda and Mariposa.

It became necessary to meet this competition within the line itself, and the Oceanic company built three high powered and able vessels, the Ventura, Sierra and Sonoma. Just about this time the annexation of Tutuila and Hawaii intervened to make the competition of the New Zealand boats impracticable under the coastwise shipping provisions of the navigation laws. With the new boats the Oceanic company began some six years ago a service of thirteen sailings in the year, a vessel leaving every third week. Now comes the end. The Oceanic company lays the blame on Congress; New Zealand lays the blame on the shortcomings of the steamship company.

After forty years the American flag is hauled down on a trade route of its own discovery, and this is done at a time when direct competition has become impossible. The Canadian Pacific has long paralleled the route by its line between Victoria and Sydney by way of Honolulu and Fiji, and American trade and travel seeking to follow the old line must now be diverted to British bottoms and through British ports.

Generalizing in Philanthropy.

Mrs. SAGE's generous and comprehensive philanthropic enterprise, which was announced yesterday, illustrates the present tendency among donors of large sums for social welfare work to leave the administration of their benefactions to the judgment of others, unhampered by narrow restrictions. The scope of the Sage Foundation is broad enough to include everything that a sociologist may find interesting or think important. "To investigate and study the causes of adverse social conditions, including ignorance, poverty and vice," offers for the trustees a field of activity that the most enthusiastic will not call cramped or small.

The motive inspiring such donations is the belief or hope that somewhere in the social organization there is a correctable fault, to which may be charged the failure of a certain proportion of each generation of human beings to win an honest and decent livelihood. If such a fault exists, and can be discovered, its correction would follow as a matter of course, however difficult the task. The State would undertake the cure, not from charitable motives but as a measure of self-interest and self-protection.

It has long been complained that many benefactions, limited by the terms of their deeds of gift to specific objects, become in time useless or productive of positive evils. This is a possibility that Mrs. SAGE has foreseen and provided against as well as may be. Centuries hence, if the Sage Foundation is still in existence, its managers will not be tied down to any outgrown subject of inquiry or relief. They will be free to spend their income as seems to them best, attacking new problems as they present themselves and searching for the causes of public maladies of which this age does not dream.

The first board of trustees for the administration of this remarkable gift has been well chosen.

Colonel BRYAN's conservatism and caution increase with the prospering years. Tuesday he told the American Roadmakers' Association in Pittsburgh that "the common people have never had a chance," and revealed the fact that "even the Government is discriminating against the farmer, for it appropriates forty times as much for the army and navy as it does for the Agricultural Department." The Colonel's mighty intellect amazes and overwhelms all who observe its operation and are blessed by its product, and his passion for underestimation is one of his most attractive characteristics.

It would be a tactical mistake for the bold British suffragettes to try to storm the House of Commons in trousers, as one of them proposes. No woman can look like a martyr in trousers. Rose minds are at work to defeat the cause of Miss PARKURST and her sisters with rigidity. Let the army of invasion once swagger around in the bifurcated garment that betrays their sex to the scuffer and the cause of woman suffrage would be lost. It must be an enemy that has proposed trousers.

May it please the Court, I have noticed that the opposing counsel has engaged in a great deal of irrelevant chatter during the progress of this case. A murder trial is a very serious proceeding, and I would suggest that the lawyers be instructed to eliminate all witlings at each other's expense.

The name of the extraordinary man who made this protest was JOHN G. SYDNEY. If his advice were to be followed generally jury duty would not be so terrible an ordeal, murder trials would be much shorter, the country would save money, and the defendant would be just as well off.

Mr. MERRY had indicated the American flag on the vessel which proceeded to San Jose, Costa Rica.

We are informed by a trustworthy Old Salt that this vessel was surely the Wabble. No other ship, he says, could fly so high.

Envelope of an Enterprising Attorney.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: Here is an envelope I have been using as a "return stamped envelope" for ten years in order that I may not be suspected of an attempt at gratuitous self-advertising; you will kindly change the indications:

SOMEWHERE, (N. Y.)
P. O. BOX 44.
SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION,
CENTRAL BUILDING.

The idea occurred to me while riding in a postal car and watching the postal clerks sort letters. I must be ahead of Mr. H. E. Warner and Japan. I endeavored to have others adopt the idea, but they would not. I have quite a stock on hand, so I now find myself in fashion with the postal clerks.

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION,
CENTRAL BUILDING.

Down With the Poets!

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: "W. B. Yeats" is a name that is becoming popular, or is he? I have been reading his "The Waste Land" and "The Second Coming." I am sure that the poet is a very good one, but I am sure that the poetry is a very bad one. I am sure that the poetry is a very bad one, and I am sure that the poetry is a very bad one.

FITZFIELD, Mass., March 12.

Irresistible Inducement.

Knicker—Do you wish to listen to reason? Knicker—I think she would like to see a party line.

THE \$101,000,000 BARGE CANAL.

Interesting Indications of a Turn in the Tide of Sentiment About the Swindle.

From the Binghamton Press.
The taxpayers of the anti-canal counties will view the troubles of the canal boomers with amusement. We were unable to prevent the big scheme from sliding through the constitutional mill, but it is comforting to find that before the State has spent much of the proposed \$101,000,000 fund it has been necessary for the canal men to take breath and seek for ways of escaping from the unpleasant situation in which they find themselves.

Before a single barge goes through the proposed ditch the whole system will be antiquated. Already it has been found necessary to increase the length and depth of the locks in the endeavor to make the proposed improvement keep pace with future demands. But expert traffic men are of the opinion that the barges which are depended upon to carry freight through the proposed canal will not be operated at a profit when the work is completed.

Every delay and obstacle with which the canal boomers have to contend increases the probability that the extravagant scheme eventually will be sidetracked or converted into something which will give the great West an adequate all American water route to the sea.

From the Rochester Union and Advertiser.

The situation thus presented is highly interesting. If it should result in a delay long enough to create a popular demand for abandonment of the whole stupendous enterprise of loot and graft upon which the State has entered, the taxpayers would be saved from a mighty burden, which they will otherwise be doomed to carry for many years to come.

From the Rochester Post-Express.

There is only one honest thing to do. If it be ascertained on trial that the financial institutions will not buy the 3 per cent. bonds at par the Legislature should submit to the people the question as to whether barge canal bonds shall be issued at a higher rate. Any circumlocution, any trickery, any effort on the part of the Legislature to accomplish indirectly what cannot be accomplished directly, would be unfair to the people and illegal if not positively dishonest, and the illegality would so taint the bonds that they would not be salable at any price.

From the Utica Daily Press.

When they wanted to run the barge canal across this State some scientific gentleman argued that surely the earth should not be behind Mars in the matter of such enterprises. If a little red hot planet like Mars had the sun could have caught sight of a salubrious and comfortable climate like this should not be without them.

Now comes Prof. Pickering of Harvard and he rather upsets that canal theory, but as a practical argument here it is of less account than formerly, because the barge canal has been voted, which is a good many years ahead of its being built. Prof. Pickering has been exploring the volcanoes of Hawaii. There he found that exceedingly rich vegetation had grown up along the cracks and crevices of the volcanic surfaces. Looked at from a distance these mammoth cracks, lined by luxuriant foliage, would look like canals. Outlines of the same sort have been seen in the moon. Prof. Pickering argues that instead of being canals on Mars, the lines are only those indicating cracks in volcanic surfaces, and that after all there is no earthly evidence that the Martians are skilled as civil engineers and surveyors, and that really what they did is no reason under the sun why New York should have voted to have a barge canal.

From the Rochester Post-Express.

We are informed that a bill is to be introduced proposing that the rate of interest on canal bonds shall be fixed by the Governor, the Comptroller and the chairmen of the Finance Committee of the two houses, or by some of them, and that this bill will be submitted to the people for their action at the November election.

The advocates of the barge canal who made a strenuous campaign in 1903 and carried their project by the votes of the cities of Buffalo and New York will dread to have the question submitted again, for there has been a remarkable change in public sentiment, but there is no other way that will stand the test of judicial scrutiny. Financiers will not take the 3 per cent. bonds at par, and any indirect method of increasing the interest rate would so taint the bonds that nobody would buy them.

From the Utica Observer.

And now we have the barge canal on our hands, and the expenditure thereon has been more than before in the history of the State. The work goes slowly. Opinions differ as to the importance with which the public may regard it. But surely we have the old canal question very much on our hands.

From the Springfield Republican.

Close money and the poor market for bonds have put a block in the way of enlarging the Erie Canal, for which New York State has voted at an estimated expense of over \$100,000,000. Popular enthusiasm regarding that project never did dip to the very great, and is distinctly wanting in the present juncture.

The Demand for Orientals as Household Servants.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: The letter of Mr. Willey to the SUN of March 12 on the "Japa head" Patrick and Bridget knock that their places are not safe overnight if we can get competent, quiet and respectful servants, and so the Legislature is called on to keep them entrenched.

Have long since discharged Patrick and Bridget and enjoy a domestic peace known only to the few that employ other help. The whole country needs, and can use, a million or more of the excellent Japanese and Chinese household servants, and our patient and long suffering housewives are anxiously waiting for them.

GLEN RIDGE, N. J., March 12.

El Paso Speaks.

From the Denver Republican.
The manager of the San Carlo opera company almost caused a riot when he announced that he had secured a lot of El Paso, Tex. Press.

We may be shy of ballet artists here in Texas, and of hats that have to get a daily shine. But we're up to date in single dress suits, and clear from "Liebering" right down to "Auld Lang Syne."

The left nostril don't trouble us in Wagner. We can tell 'em with our hand behind our back. And there can't be no four fish Impresario. Try to turn us off the operaatic track.

We can pick a bum note, blindfold, in "The Dutchman." And we know just when a dissonance is struck. We can sing, or dance. The "Gutterdamning."

HOUSE SERVICE RECORDS.

Newton Set Continuously for 20 Years and Ketcham 33 Years in All.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: Up to the time when the Hon. John H. Ketcham established his record as longest serving member of the House of Representatives without question that the Hon. William S. Holman of Indiana held the record for length of service in the national House of Representatives.

John H. "H" in a letter to THE SUN has made the interesting discovery that Thomas Newton of Norfolk, Va., in the last century sat continuously in the House for twenty-nine years and five days. Moreover, that after a lapse of twenty years he served again for two years more, or thirty-one years and five days in all, beating the Holman record by more than a year. Mr. Newton's long record, however, does not displace those of Messrs. Ketcham and Cannon for first and second place among records for total years of service.

All unaging, the almost forgotten and neglected Newton held the House long service record for nearly sixty years. He was not displaced until 1905, when Mr. Ketcham took his record from him. Such is fame. Mr. Newton entered Congress in 1801 and left it in 1866.

Upon the occasion of the House eulogies upon Mr. Holman, the supposition that he was the member of longest service was in good faith alluded to by several of his colleagues as his most distinctive honor.

Another interesting fact is disclosed by the Newton record. He held and still holds the record for continuous House service, an honor which no other member has attained.

The latter served twenty-eight years and ten months. Mr. Newton twenty-nine years and five days, continuously. The four record holders for continuous service, therefore, in their order are as follows:

Name and State.	Age.	Service.
John H. Ketcham, New York.	73	33 years and 33 days.
William S. Holman, Indiana.	71	31 years and 5 days.
Thomas Newton, Virginia.	84	29 years and 5 days.
Charles O'Neill, Pennsylvania.	72	29 years and 5 days.
Henry H. Randall, Pennsylvania.	71	27 years and 10 months.
Samuel J. Randall, Pennsylvania.	62	27 years and 10 months.
Alfred C. Harmer, Pennsylvania.	75	27 years and 10 months.
Samuel S. Cox, Ohio-New York.	63	26 years and 10 months.
John R. Taylor, Pennsylvania.	62	26 years and 10 months.
Charles F. Mercer, Virginia.	61	24 years and 10 months.
Nathaniel Macon, North Carolina.	58	24 years and 10 months.
Richard P. Bland, Missouri.	61	24 years and 10 months.
Robert H. Smith, Virginia.	61	24 years and 10 months.
John Randolph, Virginia.	56	23 years and 10 months.
Alexander H. Stephens, Georgia.	72	23 years and 10 months.
Samuel E. Payne, New York.	64	24 years and 10 months.
William A. Rorer, Pennsylvania.	62	22 years and 10 months.
Joshua R. Giddings, Ohio.	64	22 years and 10 months.
Thomas B. Reed, Maine.	60	22 years and 10 months.

There are fourteen others who have made a record of twenty years each. In the order of their names they are: William A. Rorer, Pennsylvania; Samuel E. Payne, New York; John R. Taylor, Pennsylvania; Charles F. Mercer, Virginia; Nathaniel Macon, North Carolina; Richard P. Bland, Missouri; Robert H. Smith, Virginia; John Randolph, Virginia; Alexander H. Stephens, Georgia; Samuel S. Cox, Ohio-New York; William A. Rorer, Pennsylvania; Joshua R. Giddings, Ohio; Thomas B. Reed, Maine.

LESLIE J. PERCY.
WASHINGTON, D. C., March 12.

The Head of the General Staff.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: In THE SUN of March 12 it is said: "The ranking officer of the army is ex officio head of the General Staff." This is an error of fact. The present head of the General Staff is Major-General J. Franklin Bell. There are several general officers higher in rank than Major-General Bell, but none of them is ex officio head of the General Staff. The present head of the General Staff is Major-General J. Franklin Bell.

Major-General Bell is a native of New York. He was born in 1840, and graduated from West Point in 1862. He served in the Civil War, and was promoted to Major-General in 1890. He is now the head of the General Staff of the United States Army.

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Henry VIII's Saturday Wash.

From the Lancet.
The origin of Saturday night tubbing seems to be lost in the mists of antiquity. According to Mr. Sidney Lee, who writes with authority and amusing discursive at Barber's Hall on the "Relations Anciently Existing Between Barbers and Surgeons," it was the custom of no less a person than King Henry VIII. to perform public ablutions on occasional Saturday evenings. The "King's barber," one John Pen, Penn, or Penne, an ancestor of the famous Quaker of that name, was expected to be present at the august ceremonies, when the Defender of the Faith was pleased to cleanse his head, legs or feet. The regulation required that the barber should perform the duty, dating apparently from the reign of Edward IV. It is preserved in the "Liber Niger Domus Regis," and its wording seems to imply that the solemn ablutions were partly a religious and partly a royal duty, and that the King's majesty often did without them.

The royal barber, who was also a groom of the chamber, and the King's majesty often did without them. The royal barber, who was also a groom of the chamber, and the King's majesty often did without them. The royal barber, who was also a groom of the chamber, and the King's majesty often did without them.

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The Birds' Silent Call to Arms.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir